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Developing an Attitudinal Model of Collaborative Consumption: Moderating Effects of Consumer Traits and Situational Factors

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Significance/innovation of the concept: Collaborative consumption (CC) is referred to as “sharing economy, peer economy, collaborative economy, crowdsourcing, and the maker-movement” (Botsman, 2015). It is built on the notion of “what mine is yours” and consumption behavior includes sharing, borrowing, lending, and exchanging skills for goods. Students of the new millennium are young enough to recall their childhood days of negotiating toy play, borrowing games, and trading with friends. There is a behavioral shift in millennium consumer consumption whereas owners of certain personal assets are sharing for a profit in the digital marketplace (To, 2015). ‘Some see sharing, with it as a mantra where “access trumps ownerships,” as a post-crisis antidote to materialism and overconsumption. It may also have environmental benefits, by making more efficient use of resources’ (All eyes on the sharing economy, 2013, p. 2). “It is no coincidence peer-to-peer shopping has become popular with this tech-savvy generation, especially after the repercussions of the global financial crisis of 2008” (All eyes on the sharing economy, 2013, p. 1). Emphasizing the significance of access to new product experiences rather than ownership challenges the traditional consumer behavior model and the value of ownership. CC is particularly true in the realm of fashion and fashion products. There are many retail apps that support a shared wardrobe, renting dresses, and the reselling of women’s clothing, shoes, handbags, and accessories such as *Poshmark*, *Walk In My Closet*, *RealReal*, *Threadflip* along with others (Meltzer, 2014). The purpose of this abstract is to examine the concept of CC as a critical concept to update theory related to fashion consumption. Fashion marketers experimenting with retail apps that support CC may find some consumers are not interested. Therefore, the question of which personality characteristics determine consumer interest in CC apps are becoming increasingly relevant for fashion marketers as they consider: (1) whether to use CC retail apps; (2) how to design these apps to appeal to different consumers; (3) to which consumer to promote such service options; and (4) how to do so.

Analysis and synthesis of relevant facts, data and literature: The objective of this current concept abstract is to propose an attitudinal model for CC as it relates to fashion retail apps to illustrate the moderating effects of consumer traits and situational factors on the relationship of social media usage and gratification. This helps: (1) understand if fashion is particularly amenable to CC; (2) investigate usage patterns more accurately; and (3) examine whether fashion consumers indeed show different behavior patterns that match the altruistic (sustainability) versus individualistic (economic benefits) motivations.

A known study that has examined CC focused on clothing swapping and clothing libraries through qualitative interviews with millennials (Grimshorn & Jordan, 2015). Freedom and control were important motivators for ownership while saving, and political and social stances were reasons to participate in CC of clothing. To investigate the aforementioned objectives, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985) will be used. SDT posits that motivations can be distinguished as intrinsic (satisfaction on its own) or extrinsic (for a separate or external outcome). The theory lends itself to be further examined as Hamari et al. (2014) developed a reliable instrument devised from other sources to

measure CC after testing it with registered users of Sharetribe. The authors noted and introduced Likert scale measures for extrinsic motivators including: (1) enjoyment; (2) sustainability, and intrinsic motivators; (3) economic benefits; and (4) reputation for CC. Furthermore, there are measures of behavioral intentions that can be used for CC (Bhattachetjee, 2001). The actual behavior with regards to fashion could be defined further. These may include sharing fashion information to trading fashion objects, digital methods of trading fashion objects and information, etc. The research model (Figure 1) is developed for CC to illustrate the moderating effects of consumer traits and situational factors on the relationship of motivation of usage, attitude and behavior, and the potential relationships that could be measured using the survey to assess CC of fashion goods.

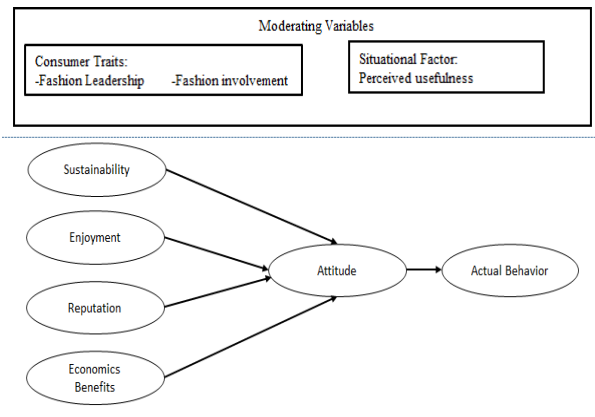


Figure 1. Developing an Attitudinal Model of Collaborative Consumption: Moderating Effects of Consumer Traits and Situational Factors

Future Action: Understanding of consumer behavior patterns is always the major focus of marketing and brand managers. Having a better understanding of consumers and gaining insights about their behavior and attitude towards fashion collaborative apps enable marketers to interact and communicate directly with consumers efficiently and improve their marketing efforts to enhance business performance. CC is a timely topic that can be explored to update current fashion consumption research. The proposed framework will contribute in advancing consumer understanding. The potential of this study has exponential benefits to build on the limited existing knowledge about CC of fashion. For example, to assess demographic trends in CC and mental and behavioral shift of millennials who live in the United States- East Coast, urban city, Mid-America, rural, and the deep South- could be surveyed. It is also important to explore

other theoretical concepts that might shed light on the CC trend, such as diffusion theory.

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